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THE ALDINE.

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SALUTATORY.

IN the opening of Plato's Banquet occurs a scene which presents an attractive picture of the proverbial Athenian grace and courtesy. Aristodemus, meeting Socrates, who is on the way to a supper-party at Agathon's, is invited to go along with him, with the assurance that he will find a hospitable greeting. On arrival, he is cordially welcomed by the host, a good place assigned him at table, and a servant set promptly to work to supply his wants, while a messenger is sent back for Socrates, who according to his wont, has stopped short in the street some way back, in one of his well-known brown studies. It is a very simple little story, with no especial impressiveness or point, except as leading us to infer that Socrates, despite his *sans-culotte* habits, kept some very good company, and that the cultivated young men of Plato's time were a very kindly and pleasant set of fellows. It may serve, too, to introduce the brief words of salutation with which we offer our New Year's best wishes to our friends, coming before them, as we do to-day, in a new dress and under somewhat altered auspices.

It is usual to compare literature and literary men to a republic, and the comparison is just. But the press, the ephemeral literature of the daily, weekly, or monthly journals, might be likened to a supper-party, before a board spread with all sorts of nourishing or toothsome dishes, and where any well-dressed and well-bred guest is welcome, not only to his seat, but to his word in the pleasant *causerie* of the hour. At this assemblage of good things and good fellows we modestly hope for a place, proposing to limit ourselves mainly to the lighter and more sparkling meats and wines, and to do our best to be agreeable to our trencher companions. It will be our effort that our voice be not heard in harsh or unfriendly dissonance amid the general good humor, and our pride and pleasure if, at any time, it be our fortune to drop any good thought or suggestive hint into the rich, clear flow of the conversation. Recognizing the law by which a dull, pragmatical, or obstreperous guest is quietly dropped from the list, we shall strive fairly and honorably to earn our platterful and insure our permanent welcome.

To speak for a moment without figure—spite of the common complaint about the multiplication of magazines and journals, it still seems as if, especially in the more purely artistic and literary departments of current literature, there might be room for one more. That, in face of the overpowering weight given by the American public to exclusively practical matters, a little more force may be admitted on the æsthetic wing, hardly any lover of good letters will be inclined to deny. In the field of moral and intellectual thought matters are scarcely discussed so exhaustively or so brilliantly as to leave no room for one more worker to add his modest mite. It is the doctrine of many far-seeing thinkers—a doctrine not strikingly new, but still sadly often overlooked—that young and vigorous nations tend to materialism. In the struggle and the triumph of our fresh, expansive, vigorous practicality, the interests of the intellect and the imagination are apt to go to the wall. Among the little band of devoted workers who stand firm in their advocacy of all higher culture, the ranks are hardly so serried or so well drilled as to exclude any honest and patriotic recruit. We are proud and glad to range ourselves under their banner, promising them honest and liberal fellowship, and asking the like in return.

In art matters, especially, we hope always to have open eyes and a ready hand for all that is fresh, good and progressive. In pictorial art it has hitherto been, and for some time may be, our fortune to stand as the medium of communication between the creative ingenuity of others and the receptive taste of our patrons. We have made it our specialty to seek out and preserve from oblivion, or to bring into wider circulation, the choicest works of the pencil and graver, worthy of the best setting, which we intend to give them. With increased success and larger means—if the gods accord it—we shall do more

than this, and shall spare no effort to develop in independent channels the wealth of humorous or poetic creativeness awaiting recognition in the busy brain and deft fingers of our native artists. If at any time we may have seemed to set more value on dress than on matter, caring less *what* was printed than *how*, it will be our earnest endeavor in the coming years to set the literary character of our journal on the same level which, in an artistic light, we are proud to hope it has already achieved. For all that is good, true and beautiful we shall be in future, as we have tried to be in the past, ready with good words and hearty sympathy.

And so, without more egotistic preface, we wish all good people everywhere—but most especially our kind friends, the readers of *THE ALDINE*—a right happy New Year; and, in the words of Tiny Tim, "may God bless us every one!"

PROF. PORTER ON CLASSICAL STUDIES.

CHARLES CARROLL.

IT may be, in round numbers, fifteen hundred years since Latin and Greek ceased to be the popular and spoken languages of European nations. But the Tartar and the Scandinavian, while they crushed or uprooted almost everything else in the countries they overran, felt the subtle influence of arts and letters. They studied the languages of their victims, and it must have been with a sort of angry bewilderment that painted Goth or bearded Lombard saw his gransons going dutifully to the schools and painfully horsed through the grammar of his trembling subjects. As from the chaos of nationalities which had swept down on southern and middle Europe was slowly developed the *lingua vulgaris*, or popular dialect of each state or province, the use of Latin for speaking and writing was gradually restricted to the politer classes. As its scope contracted, however, its value rose. A free use of the learned tongue was the condition and the mark of an educated man, and a fame for elegant Latinity was as great a glory, at least among the "clerks" of that period, as the reputation of the gayest courtier or the bravest knight. The worth of a learned education was recognized in one of the most curious and striking legal provisions ever known in any age. That proverbial benefit of clergy, by which so many a clever scamp managed to dodge the halter, was not only the knowledge how to read—for it was probably in the rarest instances that the vulgar tongue got written at all—but how to read Latin. With the breaking up of the Byzantine civilization the study of Greek, which had fallen into disuse, took a fresh impulse, and many a smarting schoolboy echoed in his heart the strong criticism of the dismayed churchman who called it an invention of the devil. As century after century the popular language grew and spread in all departments of popular life and even percolated into the higher letters, the schoolmen still clung obstinately to their last hold. Even in bluff, practical England the reverence for classical learning died hard. All their great men—all their gentlemen, by class distinction—were fed on an unremitting diet of Latin and Greek. Burleigh and Cranmer, Strafford and Essex, and, down to later days, Pitt and Walpole, Peel and Derby, were all alike most democratically switched for a false quantity or an erroneous mood.

With the growth of our own republic, and the rapid colonization of the great West, as also with the immense commercial and manufacturing impulse in English life during the nineteenth century, a great change has taken place in popular sentiment on both sides of the Atlantic. Face to face with the exigencies of a hard and precarious existence, the western pioneer, alike with the care-worn business man of New York, Chicago, or Liverpool feels the urgent need of weapons which shall put him in the speediest and most victorious relations with the contending forces of nature or society. That he has a soul, taste, imagination, which might be cultivated, he dimly surmises or sadly concedes; but that he has a perishable body of his own, with sundry other perishable bodies in intimate dependence on it, admits of not a moment's question. Men, too, of higher intellectual grade, attaching a perhaps undue value to research in the physical sciences and conquest over the forces of material nature, are growing impatient of studies which appear to react mediately only on progress in natural science, and to which they even deny any great immediate effect in mental training. And so it comes to pass that, within the

last fifty years, very general and increasing discontent has been manifested with the standard diet of Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, on which our educational nurslings of a higher grade are wont to be fed. Repeated attacks, through the press and in the town-meeting, the school committee, and the college corporation, have had for effect to diminish the amount of attention devoted to these so-called antiquated studies, and to introduce many more modern branches of language, science, or general literature, which are supposed better fitted to send the young American into the toiling world at the earliest period, with the best armor and weapons for his inevitable work.

The question is not by any means in a nutshell, nor is it likely to be answered, in this century, to the full satisfaction of the disputants. Still, a brief review of the case, in the spirit of the book which suggests our article, may not be amiss.

The advocates of the old, or literary education, in contradistinction to the practical training, have two grounds to take, accordingly as they defend or give up the value of classics and mathematics in a purely practical light. These two defenses do not mutually exclude each other; the literary conservative, when driven from the one, may take refuge in the other, or maintain them both in parallel line.

If the present feverish and premature activity in American life is to continue, perhaps it might be wise to drop the first ground—the practical value of theoretic and literary training—at once. If it is to be our highest ideal to create keen brokers or lawyers at twenty-one and millionaires at thirty-five, the sooner the young aspirant to fiscal honors drops everything else and concentrates his energies on the one focal point—financial gain—the better. It is a theory of certain cynical observers that, in order to adequately meet the keenness, the activity, the audacity, and the selfishness, which so often characterize both the higher and lower walks of American business life, the youth who makes success his god, when once furnished with a common school education, had better plunge into the arena and learn the tricks of the trade with the least possible delay. This view certainly seems supported by the appeal to fact in the persons of the financial giants of our country, who are, as a rule, not famous for their acquaintance with the so-called humanities. But if it be recognized, as we hope it will, that in this matter we are making more haste and less speed—that American prosperity, founded on this basis of feverish and unprincipled acquisition, and tending to superficiality, meanness, arrogance, sensuality, and a whole crop of other vices, is illusive, or, at all events, morally and nationally ruinous—this being recognized, the professor, with his grammar and black-board, has a fair right to a hearing. If it be our object to make our sons not merely, or, in first instance, wealthy, but, first of all, good workmen in a high sense, trusting to Providence for the material success which ought logically to follow—this being our intent, we must make up our minds to a sacrifice of time and energy commensurate with the end in view, and we may fairly call in the professed educator to our aid. Now, in this matter, the conservative claims, with great show of reason, that the expenditure of a few years in literary training of a high character, by its gymnastic effect on all the mental powers, makes up tenfold for all the apparent loss of time involved. He further argues that, from the observation of the most thorough instructors in all ages, as well as from practical experience, we are not at liberty to doubt that ancient languages from their subtle grammatical structure, and mathematics, from their logical and abstract character, are directly and highly favorable to a healthy mental development, even in contemplation of the most practical employment, subsequently. For this he appeals not only to theoretic reasoning, but to the confirmation of facts. Prof. Porter declares that, according to the experience of practical men, a young man who has gone through a thorough collegiate course will, in a few years, be a better merchant or lawyer than his comrade, who hurried into his life-work by so many years the earlier. It is within our own experience that Boston merchants have long set an almost inordinate value, as clerks, on graduates of the English High School, partly, no doubt, from some supposed proficiency in French, arithmetic, and the like; but very much, we have no doubt, from the general vigor and clearness of mind which the drill of the school in non-practical studies is known to give. That the most theoretical curriculum is often directly useful

in furnishing tools for practical employment, hardly needs demonstration. Mathematics almost every one may need, and, in numberless branches of manufacture and construction, must. Our cities swarm with commercial colleges, professing to teach three or four modern tongues, and many merchants make great sacrifices to keep their boys a few years at French and German schools for the same purpose. But every one who has, in college or after graduation, learned modern languages, or who has had the experience of teaching them to classes trained and untrained in the classical languages, will look with favor on Mill's assertion that the mastery of Latin "makes it easier to learn four or five of the continental languages than one without it." It should be added that moderate men, like Dr. Porter, do not resist the introduction into school and college courses of a fair admixture of such studies as chemistry and astronomy, physics and metaphysics; but they do object to their excluding the more general training of the standard studies, and urge that they should be taught in a broad, elementary way, and without that crowding the programme and frittering away the time of the student which makes an unpleasant feature in some of our American colleges.

If the conservative, through weakness in his own argument or over-pertinacity in his opponent, is driven from his first ground—the practical advantages of the conventional studies—he has higher ground to retire to. Granting that Latin and Greek and Mathematics are not available for the daily uses of working life, he can still plead their value as pure intellectual gymnastics, as a mental and spiritual training for which the world has as yet found no substitute. It is a common reproach that the study of the classics is a mere training of memory, and that any blockhead who has strength of mind enough to cram his head with a lot of rules and lists of words, may, painfully, but with a certain mechanical perseverance, be a classical scholar. Every one who has tried the trade of instruction knows this to be precisely not the case. The very first difficulty the teacher meets—the fact which renders classical study a dread and a loathing to careless or heavy-witted lads—is that it is not mechanical. The rules can not be committed to memory and used without discrimination, like carpenter's rule of thumb. Great as is the labor needed to acquire a vocabulary, it is the farthest in the world from being a sheer effort of memory, but, in common with the learning the rules, a very delicate, subtle and imaginative business, involving powers of analysis, comparison and inference which may appropriately form the basis of later metaphysical study. In fact, we might fairly call the study of the classical languages—simply as languages—the most metaphysical study known, except pure philosophy itself. And this advantage would obtain, in great measure, though the pupil should never go beyond his grammar and phrase-book. To the more advanced student of Homer and Æschylus, of Plato and Cicero and Seneca, the classics bring an influence not merely intellectual, in the narrower interpretation, but, in the higher sense, spiritual, moral, and æsthetic. On this point it would be easier to write pages than lines, but our limits force us to be content with the barest hint, and we could do no better than refer the reader to the work on which our article is but a running comment. For the mathematics we need hardly plead with so much earnestness, as their value is more generally acknowledged; though here, as in the rest of the field, the same distinction exists between the utilitarians and the idealists, the one party insisting on mathematical training as preliminary to later technical studies; the other claiming it, like Plato, as indispensable for health and vigor of mind as mind, whether one is to turn out a statesman, an engineer, or a ploughman.

The questions raised in these paragraphs are perhaps the most important discussed in Dr. Porter's very able volume. What we intended for a comment on the book has grown into a short essay on one of the most important questions of the work. Any discussion of the other very important matters in this valuable treatise—the system of elective studies—college government—the religious character of colleges and the like—must be postponed for future consideration, if any.

Own inventions are fair—yet the fair inventions of others
Gladly to know and to prize, deem'st thou less utterly thine?

Children of others—who e'er as his own has tenderly loved them?
Error, the child of our blood, nestles so close to our hearts!

—Goethe.

THE PRINCESS' BATH.

From the German

WHEN the moon in azure heaven at the midnight hour is beaming,
And the ripples softly murmur, as in pleasant slumber dreaming,
Downward to the lonely sea-shore goes the princess proud and fair,
And with busy fingers loosens all her wealth of golden hair.
Drops her bosom's coy concealment, and with thirsty panting motion,
Deeply drinks the cooling breezes breathing landward from the ocean.

Slowly lingering sinks her mantle, till, in beauty full displayed,
At her own sweet figure blushing, shrinking, stands the lovely maid.
Shyly first she wets her foot-tips, then, her whole form boldly throwing,

Plunges deep and sudden downward, where the warm, still waves are flowing;

Till the waters foam and sparkle, and in eager sweet desire
Nestle round her swelling bosom with their rings of lambent fire.

Then the sea begins to murmur; drawn by love's resistless spell,
Towards the beach in mad excitement all the billows rage and swell;

And the dolphin gazes kindly with his clear sagacious eyes,
For he feels his cold heart glowing with a tender, glad surprise.

Dost thou hear the sea complaining—maiden, from its deepest caves,
Hearest whispering, hear'st inviting, the wild pleading of the waves?

Maiden, thou hast fired the ocean, and the spirits from below
Feel the magic of thy rosy lips, thy bosom's stainless snow.

'Tis the tawny-crested warriors, the knights who, in their bloom,
In their youthful pride sailed hither, steering onward to their doom,

While the harp resounded merrily, and foamed the circling cup,
Till the sea, the dread Insatiate, ships and warriors swallowed up.

'Tis the grey-haired men and heroes, brave in deed and famed in story,
Who met here in deadly sea-fight, all athirst for martial glory.

'Tis the gentle fair-haired fisher-lad whose song thou oft hast heard,
Whom thy beauty's cruel magic to the fatal plunge hath stirred.

Ah, the sighing, ah, the wailing, where they lie so long forsaken,
Buried deep in ghastly caverns, 'mid the hydra and the kraken!

With the billows eddying downward, with the flood-streams from below,
Floating, drifting, forms of beauty hover onward as they flow.

And the joys they once have tasted in their days of youthful pleasure,
And the happy warmth once throbbing in the young heart's eager measure—

All, it all comes back to taunt them, in the dreamy magic spell—
Wish and longing, and desire, but alas! no life as well!

Now their spirits pale at midnight, when the quiet stars are burning,
Hover upward from their icy depths in speechless bitter yearning.

Maiden, thou hast fired the ocean, and the spirits from the deep
Long to rest upon thy bosom—long to kiss thy rosy lip.

A fair sea-flower never fading thou shalt bloom for them below,
And their pallid, frozen bosoms, pressed to thine, again shall glow

From the sunken, stony eyeballs, wild their longing glance is thrown.

"Come, oh! come! soon strikes the hour—soon the sea will claim
its own!"

But the fair and lofty princess heareth not their whispered sighs;
Sees no shadowy phantoms watching with their spectral eager eyes.

From the waves she rises slowly, moving swanlike to the land,
And, her golden locks anointed, turns majestic from the strand.

Softly stepping, sweetly smiling, to the stolen garden meeting
Where her lover's life-warm kisses wait to bring her happy greeting.

And the poor, sad, frozen spirits cast one glance of helpless pain—
Stretch their arms once more despairing—sink back to their depths again!

—Charles Carroll.

OFFICIOUS BENEVOLENCE.

FRANCIS TIFFANY.

SOME years ago I was on a foot-journey in Switzerland with three fine young fellows. At the end of a long day's tramp we had arrived, an hour before sunset, at the top of the Grimsel Pass. Snow-clad mountains were all around us, and deep down below our feet the far-away distance of the valleys showed the high elevation we had reached. So hot and tired were we with climbing, however, that the bracing air of the upper region had not yet begun to tell on our fevered blood. There was something, therefore, very fascinating to us in the looks of a small pond that caught our eyes, filled, apparently, solely from the gradual meltings of a glacier that dripped down into it. The water in it bore about the same proportion to the mass of the ice as the contents of a pitcher do to the crystal lump floating on the surface. "What do you say to a swim?" shouted one of us. Of course, we knew the cold would prove something appalling; but we had just come from a two-month's hardening process at a water-cure, and thought ourselves up to anything in that line. So, with a lusty quotation from Goethe's "Invitation to the Bath," off went the clothes from two of our backs, and in we jumped.

The cold was appalling. It whistled away the breath in one sharp spasm; it pierced, like daggers, straight through to the marrow; it bound iron clamps around our ankles. Out of it we should have scrambled in a second, but that at the instant two enormous St.

Bernard dogs came tearing down to the shore, frantic with terror at our peril, and all of a craze to do the philanthropic thing and save us.

I want to be fair to the St. Bernard dog. I freely admit that he is the very incarnation of disinterested benevolence. He has won, and deservedly, a sacred shrine in history, in which burn ever votive lamps, and before which kneel hosts of devoted worshippers. A candid mind, moreover, compels me to admit that the special dogs in question had reason to be wrought to a more than common pitch of zeal. They had never seen two such fools before. They had no mental data for supposing there were such fools in existence. That men should imperil their lives in a midwinter attempt to drive a pack of cheese-laden mules over the frightful Alpine passes, and run their chance of being plunged over precipices, or buried in avalanches—all this fell in with past experience. Poverty has no free choice. But that two liberally-educated citizens of an enlightened republic should actually strip themselves naked for fun and leap into a pond of ice-water, and really and truly mean to be in it—well, I can not blame the dogs for the feeling that here was something they must look into personally. But, ugh! how like avalanches they came tearing down. Their sympathies were all on fire. They howled in long-drawn agony of grief. The case was a clear one. There was but one thing for them to do. Save us they must; save us at any cost.

Now, the St. Bernard dog has his own way of saving people. So all-of-a-rush with eagerness is he to do the Christian thing, that he will take hold anywhere—by the arm, by the leg, by the throat. He is well up in physics, too. Fully appreciating the preliminary importance of a good hold for a long pull and a strong pull, he always makes sure that his teeth meet, and that they get a good clinch on a bone or something. Then he knows where he is, and feels a glorious confidence that he will have you out, unless something breaks. Enthusiastic, noble-hearted fellow! there is nothing half-way about him. Strong as a buffalo, every fiber in him is at your service.

But the common-place fact about our particular case was that we did not want to be saved at all. Nay, we were horribly appalled at the bare idea of being saved. Visions of lacerated and bloody arms and legs, of exact molds in our tender flesh of the canines and incisors of both under and upper jaws, perfect as those the dentist makes in the yielding wax, rose in hideous distinctness before our eyes. What shall we do to save ourselves from being saved! was our frantic thought. One thing alone was in our favor. The St. Bernard is not a water-dog. Thank God! there are limits somewhere to his love. He will not plunge in on any provocation, but stands on the shore to gaff you out with his horrid fangs. And there stood our two would-be friends, or rather leaped, and yelled, and tore there yellow hair.

Meanwhile we, the objects of their agonizing solicitude, were fast perishing with cold. "Out of the frying-pan into the fire" was a blessed dilemma to the one we were in. How could we calm down the fanatic brutes? How could we convince their reason that we could do without their help, and decline their services without hurting their feelings? We spoke to them softly. We called them pet names. We tried to smile so sweetly as to show them how happy we were. We stood, waist-deep, close to the shore and assumed a tranquil air, as though we were, on the whole, languishing in the tepid waters of an Indian ocean. Did you ever try to smile sweetly and look perfectly at home in ice-water? Make the attempt and see what a forced look the smile will wear. I do not wonder it failed to convince the dogs; for still their frightful jaws clashed together in frantic efforts to get a grip. No turning them from their mission of love! No!—we must be saved. If we did not want to be saved, why did we get into that pond and open up such a providential chance? What were St. Bernard dogs made for but to save people? O how we cursed their officious zeal! How blasphemously did we wish in our hearts that they, too, had sinned in Adam and become as selfish and hard-hearted and Levite-like as any of the most abandoned of dogs!

Ten minutes passed before we got it through their skulls that all we asked was to be let alone; and, even, when almost exhausted, we crawled ashore, there was still a look of half uncertainty in their eyes as to whether they had done their whole duty